BL 14 VIETS

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ACTION EA 15

INFO SAL 01, SAH 03, IO 15, GPM 03, SC 01, RSC 01, USIA 12, H 02, NSC 10, L 03,
INR 07, P 04, CIA 04, DOD 01, SP 02, SS 20, AID 30, NIC 01, RSR 01,
NSAE 00, ACDA 17, /153 W

R 041109Z NOV 67
FM AMEMBASSY SAIGON
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 256
INFO AMEMBASSY BANGKOK 4851
CINCPAC
AMCONSUL DANANG 1292
AMEMBASSY VIENTIANE 2984

DEPARTMENT OF STATE A/CDC/MR
REVIEWED BY Joan Dye DATE 1/21/82
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DECLASSIFIED ☑ RELEASABLE ☑
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PA or FOI EXEMPTIONS

C O N F I D E N T I A L SAIGON 10426

CINCPAC FOR POLAD

SUBJ: LOWER HOUSE ELECTIONS: OUTCOME IN BINH THUAN

REF: SAIGON A-222

1. REF AIRGRAM REPORTED ON THE CANDIDATES FOR THE TWO VIETNAMESE, ONE NORTH MONTAGNARD (NUNG) AND ONE CHAM SEATS. THE WINNERS WERE:

A. TRUONG GIA KY SANH AKATRUC VIEN, 57, 17,468 VOTES, BUDDHIST, CHAIRMAN OF THE PROVINCIAL COUNCIL. TRUC VIEN IS SOMETHING OF A LOCAL HERO IN RURAL BINH THUAN BECAUSE OF HIS PARTICIPATION WITH THE VIET MINH

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IN ANTI-FRENCH ACTIVITIES AND HIS REPUTATION FOR CHAMPIONING THE COMMON MAN AGINST THE AUTHORITIES. HIS INFLUENCE IS PARTICULARLY STRONG IN HIS HOME DISTRICT OF HOA DA AND NEIGHBORING TUY PHONG WHERE TOGETHER HE GATHERED OVER HALF OF HIS VOTE. IN FACT VIEN RECEIVED ABOUT THE SAME NUMBER OF VOTES IN HOA DA AS DID TRUONG DINH DZU WHO ALSO OVERWHELMINGLY CARRIED THE DISTRICT IN THE PRESIDENTIAL ELECTION. THUS, CERTAINLY IN THE LOWER HOUSE ELECTION, VIEN DEMONSTRATED HIS ABILITY TO SWAY THE VOTERS IN HOA DA AND TUY PHONG. HIS ACTIVE SUPPORT OF PHU NANG KHIN FOR THE NORTHERN MONTAGNARD SEAT AND KHIN'S UNIQUELY STRONG SHOWING IN HOA DA AND TUY PHONG APPEAR TO BE THE SOLE REASON FOR KHIN'S ELECTION. VIEN HAS BEEN A DAUNTLESS CRITIC OF OFFICIALDOM IN GNERAL AND THIEU AND KY IN PARTICULAR. AS CHAIRMAN OF THE PROVINCIAL COUNCIL, VIEN HAD A FORUM FOR HIS OPINIONS AND AS A RESULT HAS INCENSED MANY GVN OFFICIALS. THE ELECTION OF TRUC VIEN WILL MATERIALLY BOLSTER THE VOICE OF DISSENT IN THE LOWER HOUSE.

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B. PHAM THE TRUNC, 27, 12,840 VOTES, BUDDHIST, HIGH SCHOOL PROFESSOR IN PHAN THIEUT, THE PROVINCE CAPITAL. TRUC WAS AN UNEXPECTED WINNER. HE NOSED OUT THE LOCAL CATHOLIC CITIZENS BLOC LEADER NGUEYN QUOC BIEN WHO HAD BEEN THOUGH A SURE WINNER. TRUC RECEIVED TWO-THIRDS OF HOS VOTES IN HAM THUAN DISTRICT WHERE THE PROVINCE CAPITAL IS LOCATED AND HIS STRONG CAMPAIGN AGAINST AMERICAN INTERVENTION IN VITNAMSES "INTERNAL AFFAIRS" MAY ACCOUNT FOR MUCH OF HIS SUPPORT.

C. THE NORTHE MONTAGNARD SEAT. PHU NAG KHIN, 34, 25,146 VOTES, CONFUCIANIST, PROVINCIAL COUNCIL MEMBER. KHIN'S VICTRY IS SIGNIFICANT INTHAT IT WAS DUE TO VIETNAMESE VOTES. NUNG VOTERS OVERWHELMINGLY REJECTED HIM. TRUC VIEN, THE LEADING VIETNAMESE WINNER, SUPPORTED KHIN AND IN VIEN'S HOME DISTRICT OF HOA DA, KHIN OUTDREW HIS CLOSEST COMPETITOR, LY-SIU CONG, BY

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OVER 4,000 VOTES. THIS PROVED TO BE THE WINNING MARGIN. IN THE NORTHERN MONTGNARD DISTRICT OF MAI NINH, KHIN FINISHED AN IGNOMINIOUS LAST IN THE FIELD OF FOUR, CAPTURING ONLY 297 OF THE 3570 VOTES CAST.

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D. THE CHAM SEAT. THANH GIAC, 44, 43,721 VOTES, CONSTITUENT ASSEMBLY DEPUTY. THANH GIAC, STRONGLY PRO-THIEU, OVERPOWERED THONG THUAN, HIS SINGLE OPPONENT FOR THE CHAM SEAT, BY A FOUR TO ONE MARGIN IN THE CHAM DISTRICT OF PHAM LY CHAM. ONCE AGAIN VIETNAMESE VOTERS IN HOA DA DISTRICT RESPONDED TO TRUC VIEN'S ENDORSEMENT OF THUAN, A FELLOW MEMBER OF THE PROVINCIAL COUNCIL, AND GAVE HIM A 3,700 VOTE MAJORITY THERE. THAN GIAC'S STRONG SHOWING AMONG THE CHAMS CARRIED HIM TO A NARROW 526 VOTE PLURALITY.

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ORIGIN/ACTION

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ARA	EUR	FE
NEA	CU	INR 5
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9P 1		9S 10
AGR	COM	FRB
INT	LAB	TAR
TR	XMB	AIR 5
ARMY 3	CIA 20	NAVY 5
OSD 34	USIA 10	NSA 3
SFA 2	NSC 6	WHK 3

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TO : DEPARTMENT OF STATE

INFO : BANGKOK, CINCPAC, DANANG, VIENTIANE

Action assigned to NEA

Action Taken NOTED

FROM : AMEMBASSY SAIGON

DATE: November 9, 1967

SUBJECT : The Lower House Elections in III Corps

Action 11/20/67

EA EA

REF : A) Saigon 8644; B) Saigon 9087; C) Saigon 9184

Office Symbol EA/VN

Name of Officer WH/M

CINCPAC FOR POLAD

Summary

Region-wide turnout for the 22 October Lower House elections was 70.3 percent of registration, off about twelve percent from the Presidential election turnout of 3 September. GVN figures show that turnout in urban areas dropped the most; even so, there is reason to suspect that official turnout figures for Gia Dinh province are somewhat inflated. Except in remote provinces which the Presidential/Senatorial campaign had ignored, little enthusiasm was displayed for the Lower House election, the fourth in seven months for most voters, by either voters or responsible officials.

Although during and after the campaign the air was filled with charges of official favoritism and widespread bribery, candidates rumored to be spending heavily or receiving GVN help did not do significantly better than their rivals. On average, the winners are young and appear capable. The Catholics did well, winning about half of III CTZ's twenty-nine Lower House seats and once again showing themselves to be far the best-organized minority group in the Corps area. Eight ARVN officers won seats, and two Cao Dai were elected from Tay Ninh. Other than the predominantly northern Catholic Greater Solidarity Force, conventional political organizations fared poorly in III CTZ. The Tan Dai Viet party, which has been under some GVN pressure, elected only one known sympathizer. The Nong Cong Binh (Farmer-Worker-Soldier) bloc claims to have elected two and the CVT (Labor) organization was shut out. Most of the III CTZ Lower House members are thus, for the moment, independents.

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